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Preparatory Committee for the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States
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Agenda item 2
Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Letter dated 23 June 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the Preparatory Committee for the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States

The Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations has the honour to address the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee for the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States on the matter of the accreditation and participation of certain non-governmental organizations and major groups in the Conference. It wishes to refer in particular to the applications of the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and the Association of Overseas Countries and Territories of the European Union (OCTA).

In that connection, Argentina wishes to point out that the Marine Stewardship Council and the Association of Overseas Countries and Territories of the European Union have undertaken activities which seek to disregard the existence of a sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas. These bodies have also referred to a so-called "British Antarctic Territory".

The Marine Stewardship Council has issued various so-called certificates attesting to the sustainability of Patagonian toothfish fishing in the waters of statistical sub-area 48.3 of the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources and in maritime areas surrounding the Malvinas Islands, which have led to repeated formal protests by the Government of Argentina to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and various approaches to the Marine Stewardship Council.

With regard to the Association of Overseas Countries and Territories of the European Union, the Argentine Government has repeatedly rejected and protested against the participation in it of the illegitimate Malvinas "government", in the context of Argentina's rejection of the claim by the European Union that the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, as well as the so-called "British Antarctic Territory",

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are countries and territories to which Part Four of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union is applicable, and has sent numerous notes of protest, dating from the signature of the Treaty concerning the accession of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the European Economic Community and to the European Atomic Energy Community in 1972 to the present day.

The Argentine Government recalls that the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas are an integral part of the national territory of the Argentine Republic and that, owing to their illegitimate occupation by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, they are the object of a sovereignty dispute between the two countries, as recognized by the United Nations and other international organizations.

It should be recalled that the United Nations General Assembly has adopted resolutions 2065 (XX), 3160 (XXVIII), 31/49, 37/9, 38/12, 39/6, 40/21, 41/40, 42/19 and 43/25, recognizing the existence of a sovereignty dispute, referred to as the "Question of the Malvinas Islands", and urging the Governments of the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to resume negotiations in order to reach a peaceful, just and lasting solution to the dispute as soon as possible. For its part, the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization has adopted more than 30 resolutions on the subject, most recently on 20 June 2013.

In this context, and bearing in mind that the scope of the activities of the Marine Stewardship Council and the Association of Overseas Countries and Territories of the European Union extends beyond the territory of the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas and the so-called "British Antarctic Territory", the Argentine Government does not object to these bodies' accreditation and participation provided that their participation is limited to the subject of the Conference and that no reference is made to the disputed territories, since it would be unacceptable for questions concerning those territories to be presented or raised, because they are the object of a sovereignty dispute specifically recognized by the United Nations. Indeed, the necessary and inescapable corollary of the obligation under international law that the dispute encumbering Argentina and the United Kingdom be peacefully resolved is that all other States and international stakeholders must refrain from acts which could hinder the fulfilment of that obligation.

On the basis of its repeatedly expressed position, the Argentine Government also wishes to make it clear that it would object to such accreditation and participation if any attempt were made to take that accreditation and participation as a precedent or use that accreditation and participation to validate illegal actions by such bodies. Accordingly, Argentina reserves its right to impose this condition on the participation of the above-mentioned bodies.

The Argentine Government should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as an official document of the Conference.

(*Signed*) María Cristina **Perceval**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative